

EQUITY

theme overview
planning & design decisions
goals

enable people from a range of economic levels, ages, and abilities to reside in the same
community

allow for adaptability to changing life circumstances

detailed design tasks
fostering sustainable living

Modern development practices have frequently resulted in an inequitable distribution of resources within society. This has resulted in a separation between different cultures, income brackets, and age groups. Sustainable urban neighbourhoods foster fairness and equal treatment for all people by creating an inclusive community where residents have a sense of belonging and equal opportunity to access services, learning, employment, recreational and cultural activities.

theme overview

why is this theme important?

The aim of equity is a fair distribution of resources within society to reduce the gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged. This is hard to achieve because of many diverging interests. Development historically has separated different cultures, classes, and even age groups. This has resulted in the creation of distinctly different spaces within communities: wealthy areas with a lot of services and amenities, and poorer areas with insufficient services and amenities, or groups of older people being separated from younger generations and basic amenities.

Traditionally, the majority of housing stock in many new municipalities is single-family detached. These dwellings are unsuitable for many residents, particularly those in the fast-growing over-fifty age demographic. A mix of housing types, both owned and rented, allows residents to live affordably in the same community throughout their lives. Good neighbourhood design fully recognizes current and future demographic trends, especially aging populations, empty nesters, single-parent families and smaller, non-traditional households. A mix of housing types also helps accommodate lower income residents (including students and fixed-income seniors), allowing access to local jobs, amenities and medical services.

why is equity important to emerald hills urban village?

In 2001, Strathcona County's population had a 41% higher household income, had 8% less visible minorities, and had 10% more married couples than the province. Housing was also less affordable than the rest of the province, with both rental and housing ownership costs higher than the provincial average (16% and 11% higher, respectively). There was also significantly less rental property available in Strathcona County (8% of private households) in comparison to the provincial average (34% of private households). These pose challenges for ensuring that Strathcona remains a diverse, mixed community that attracts and sustains people from all walks of life.

The draft Municipal Development Plan aims to offset the above trends by "promoting sensitive intensification of existing neighbourhoods, not only to increase densities and therefore efficiencies in terms of delivering services, but also to provide a wider range of housing choices." The intention is to provide and make accessible all necessary housing types, land uses, programs and services to provide for a safe, healthy and sustainable community.

how can emerald hills urban village impact on this theme?

By addressing issues of equity with strategic design methods, Emerald Hills Urban Village has an opportunity to become an inclusive, affordable, balanced, and culturally diverse community where people of all ages and a range of income levels feel at home.

summary table of goals and strategies for equity

goals	charrette process strategy
Enable people from a range of economic levels, ages, and abilities to reside in the same community.	Distribute a diversity of housing options throughout the Village.
Allow for adaptability to changing life circumstances.	Design housing and commercial spaces to be adaptable and flexible.

planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / Building form and design have implications for housing choice, allowing for diverse lifestyles and affordability ranges. A mix of housing types, both owned and rented, allows residents to live affordably in the same community throughout their lives.



Attached bungalows provide lower density units.



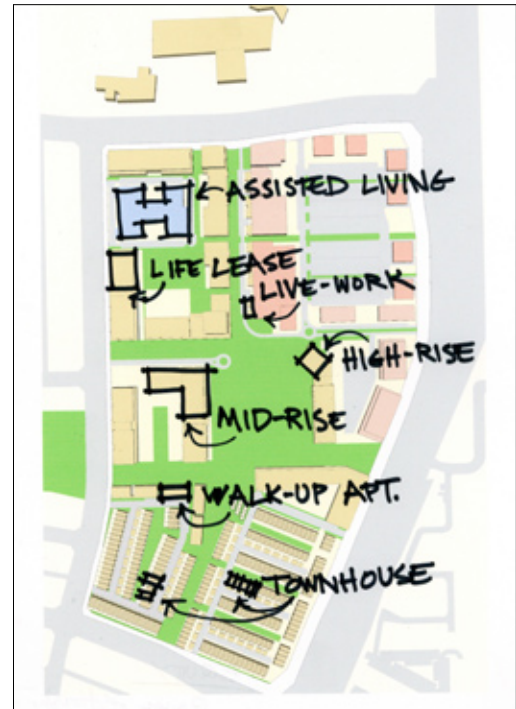
Flexible living and working arrangements can be incorporated into apartment units.



Mid-rise apartments frame the North-South landscaped corridor.



The greenways corridors link a diversity of housing types suitable to a range of ages and income levels.



A range of types and tenures is distributed through the Village (Sketch taken from design charrette).

goal / enable people from a range of economic levels, ages, and abilities to reside in the same community.

strategy / distribute a diversity of housing options throughout the village.

area i: institutional, residential, commercial

- The extended care facility provides housing for elderly in need of continual care.
- The 12-storey building along Emerald Dr. incorporates the possibility of multiple month leases in an apartment hotel .
- Permitted uses include congregate housing, seniors housing, apartment housing, apartment hotel.

area ii: residential, commercial

- The ground floor units along Eton Blvd. provide flex office opportunities.
- The apartment building incorporates assisted living units allowing for “aging in place”.
- Permitted uses include apartment housing, seniors housing, and group home facilities.

area iii: residential, commercial

- The ground floor units incorporate flex office opportunities.
- Highrise and mid-low rise apartments provide units for singles and families.
- Permitted residential uses include apartment housing and group home.

municipal reserve & public utility lot

- The Municipal Reserve and Public Utility Lots provide a greenway network that links together all of the parcels in an integrated way, thereby supporting the blend of different housing types and tenures.

area iv: residential

- Attached bungalow and single-loaded corridor apartments provide units for families, singles and empty-nesters.
- Flexible space is designed into the attached bungalows and apartments to provide home occupations or home-based business opportunities.
- Permitted uses include single dwellings, semi-detached and fourplex housing, townhousing, apartment, and group home housing.

area v: residential

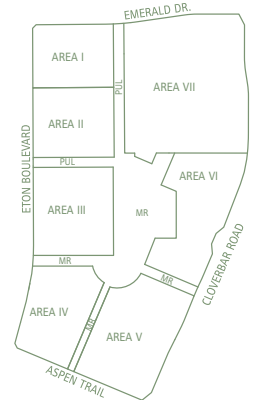
- Townhouse housing provides units for families, singles and empty-nesters.
- Flexible space is designed into the townhouses to provide home occupations or home-based business opportunities.
- Permitted uses include semi-detached and fourplex housing, townhousing, and group home housing.

area vi: residential, commercial

- Rental and cooperative housing opportunities are incorporated into the apartment buildings.
- Flex office units allow for flexible arrangements.
- Permitted residential uses include apartment housing.

area vii: commercial, residential

- Dedicated work/live units are integrated into the western edge of the commercial buildings along the North-South pedestrian-oriented street.
- Permitted residential uses include apartment housing.



planning & design decisions

general intent of this strategy / Providing residents and building owners with solutions for adapting their homes and offices to suit changing lifestyles enables people to stay in the same neighbourhood for a much longer timeframe. Designing with this concept in mind means that people do not have to leave the neighbourhood because their unit no longer accommodates their needs.

Live-work and work-live units are designed as flexible spaces that can accommodate different uses over time.



Higher ceilings and modular spaces enhances the flexibility of units in this Seniors' building.



A range of permitted uses allows for flexibility and adaptability.



The intensity of the commercial units increases over time and allows for adaptability in the range of office and retail uses.

goal / allow for adaptability to changing life circumstances.

strategy / design housing and commercial spaces to be adaptable and flexible.

area i: institutional, residential, commercial

- The range of permitted uses and the design of the buildings incorporates flexibility into how the units are used both in the present and in the future.

area ii: residential, commercial

- The range of permitted uses and the design of the buildings incorporates flexibility into how the units are used both in the present and in the future.

area iii: residential, commercial

- The range of permitted uses and the design of the buildings incorporates flexibility into how the units are used both in the present and in the future.

municipal reserve & public utility lot

- The Municipal Reserve and Public Utility Lots provide a greenway network that links the Village together in a way that supports flexible and adaptable land uses.

area iv: residential

- The range of permitted uses and the design of the buildings incorporates flexibility into how the units are used both in the present and in the future.

area v: residential

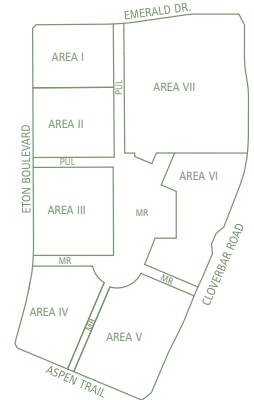
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area vii: commercial, residential

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detailed design tasks

general intent / This section highlights design tasks flagged during the charrette process as needing to be addressed during the detailed design process. LEED for Neighbourhood Development prerequisites and credits are to be satisfied.

detailed design tasks

- Ensure that universal accessibility design principles are incorporated into all buildings and units.
- Ensure that ceiling heights are high enough to support a change in use over time.
- Ensure that bathrooms and kitchens are designed to allow for easy and inexpensive change and renovation (for example, reinforce bathroom walls to allow for future inclusion of grab bars).

related leed-neighbourhood development credits

- LEED-ND SLL Credit 6: Housing and Jobs Proximity (Option 1)
- LEED-ND NDP Credit 14: Universal Accessibility
- LEED-ND NDP Credit 15: Community Outreach & Design

See www.usgbc.org for more information.



Ensure equitable housing opportunities.



Integrate neighbourhood services into community infrastructure as in this library / firehall complex.



Ensure Village habitat is available to all.

fostering sustainable living

general intent / The detailed design decisions that enable sustainable development at Emerald Hills Urban Village must also foster sustainable living. The Strategies and Initiatives/Activities identified below represent an initial framework and point of departure for generating a Fostering Sustainable Living Program at the Urban Village. They are intended to provide the integrated design team with the sustainable living lens that is to be applied to all detailed design decisions. It is recognized that these lists will evolve and be refined as the detailed design for the Urban Village emerges.



Car Share Program.

strategies

- Ensure detailed design of built environment supports equitable housing opportunities.
- Engage Village citizens in creating “equity-based” community groups and services.
- Create partnerships with local NGOs working on equity issues.
- Ensure affordable, efficient transportation alternatives for everyone.
- Promote awareness-building and community mapping.

initiatives / activities

- Lifetime user standards allowing homes to be easily adapted as people age.
- Universal accessibility.
- Residents’ Association allowing democratic participation in governing/managing.
- Voluntary Code of Conduct ensuring basic working and environmental standards met by suppliers.
- ‘Social Justice’ section in the “Living Smart at the Village” intranet handbook.
- Village Car Club.
- BikeShare - bicycle-lending program.
- Village / community mapping of equity opportunities for all segments of population.



Active seniors need universal accessibility.



Informed and active residents keep neighbourhoods strong.



Bike Share Program.